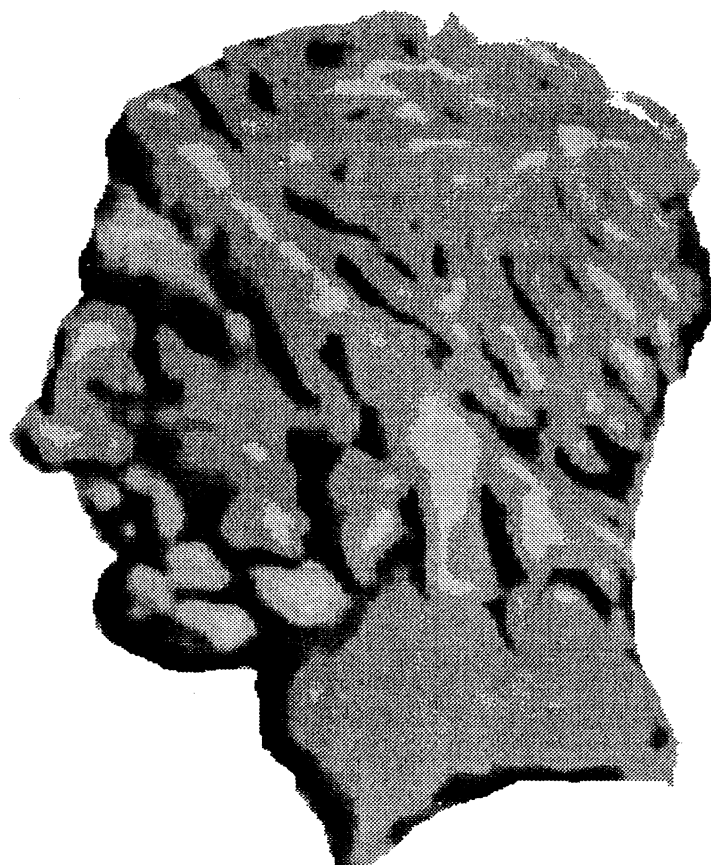


Canberra  
Amiga  
Users  
SociEty  
Inc



# NEWSLETTER

November 1990



## In This Issue

	page		
SIGs	2	Classifieds	7
Editorial	3	Textcraft Plus	8
Libraries	3	Super Page	9
Help	3	Public Domain Corner	12
Transactor - a postscript	4	Professional Draw 2.0	13
Upgrades	4	GIF Pictures	14
Desktop Publishing	5		
IMG Scanner	6		
Education Now!	7		

## AIMS OF THE SOCIETY

Canberra Amiga Users Society Incorporated (CAUSE) is an independent group (currently with about 300 members) formed for the benefit of people who own, use or are interested in the Commodore Amiga computer.

## BENEFITS

Benefits include a bi-monthly newsletter, monthly meetings, discounts (see over page), bulletin board, Public Domain library, special interest groups and the opportunity to meet and exchange ideas with other users.

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

Membership of the Society is available for an annual fee of \$20. This fee may be paid, with a filled-in application form, either to the Membership Secretary at any of the monthly meetings or by mail to the Membership Secretary, PO Box 596, Canberra 2601.

## MEETINGS

Meetings are held at 8 pm on the second Thursday of each month in the auditorium at the Canberra Workers' Club in Childers St Civic. The next meeting will be on 14 February. Members are welcome to use all Workers' Club facilities on the night. There will be no meeting in December or January.

The Beginners' Group runs from 7-8 pm prior to each meeting.

Details of upcoming meetings and main topics will be advertised in the Canberra Times "Fridge Door" the week of the meeting.

## BULLETIN BOARD

The CAUSE bulletin board is online 24 hours and is maintained by our Sysop Peter McNeil and his team. To be a member of the bulletin board, you need to pay \$5.00 additional yearly subscription.

The telephone number of the bulletin board is 2551469 and of the Sysop 2545545 (h).

## NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS

BECAUSE is produced bi-monthly. Contributions to the newsletter can be submitted to the Editor via the newsletter area of the bulletin board, at the monthly meetings or to The Editor, PO Box 596, Canberra 2601.

Articles, reviews, comments and graphics are always welcome. Where possible, please provide them in Amiga readable format ie a disk file in ASCII, Wordperfect, Scribble!, Textcraft, Transcript, Notepad or Amiga graphic format. The deadline for contributions to the newsletter is the 15th of the month preceding production.

## COPYRIGHT AND REPRINTS

BECAUSE is copyright 1989 by the Canberra Amiga Users Society Incorporated. Articles herein which are copyrighted by individual authors or otherwise explicitly marked as having restricted reproduction rights may not be reprinted or copied without written permission either from the Society or the author. All other articles may be reprinted for non-commercial purposes if accompanied by a credit line including the author's name and the words "Reprinted from BECAUSE, the newsletter of the Canberra Amiga Users Society Incorporated, PO Box 596 Canberra 2601."

## ADVERTISING

	First Run	Rerun
Full page	\$35	\$25
Half page	\$30	\$20
Quarter page	\$25	\$15

Copy is to be provided to the Editor either in Amiga graphic file format or as appropriately sized printed copy. First Run prices are applicable if the Editor has to format the advertisement.

## PRODUCTION

The Editor for this newsletter was David Wilson with help from the DTP SIG. The copy was formatted using Professional Page v1.3 and printed on a Postscript printer by Desktop Utilities.

Amiga is a registered trademark of Commodore-Amiga, Inc. Professional Page is a registered trademark of Gold Disk, Inc.

## CAUSE COMMITTEE

Director	Jonathan Bishop	2811064 (h)
Vice Director	vacant	
Secretary	Jeff Wilson	2477330 (h)
Membership Secretary	Berenice Jacobs	2547248 (h)
Treasurer	Terry Sullivan	2548950 (h)
Committee	Simon Woods	2931808 (w)
	Chris Townley	2485922 (h)
	Simon Tow	2888362 (h)
	Trevor Raddatz	2885085
Editor	David Wilson	2918324 (h)

## Special Interest Groups

The following people are coordinating a special interest group (SIG) in the listed topics. If you are interested in joining one of these groups and getting more out of your Amiga, either contact them direct or indicate your interest at the next monthly meeting:

Andrew Crawford	ph 2582685	PCs
James Dempsey	ph 2910147	Modula 2
Connie Peisley	ph 2952767	Education
Caroline Cook	ph 2888511	Genealogy
Jeff Wilson	ph 2477330	C
David Wilson	ph 2918324	Desktop Publishing

## THIS MONTH'S COVER

The linear gray scale image of the head of Zeus was produced by Hugh Preston using an IMG Scanner. Hugh writes of his experiences with the scanner on page 6.

# Editorial

Welcome to the November BECAUSE, the last for 1990.

Every issue, I worry about filling the magazine but, around deadline time, the contributions start coming in and the result is one of the best user group magazines published. This issue is no exception.

Paul Blair, editor of the "late" Amiga Transactor, gazes into his crystal-ball on page 4 but also comes down to earth in his first excellent article in a series on Superbase. Piers Goodhew continues his articles on some public domain programs and Hugh Preston describes his experiences with scanning using the IMG Scanner. Paul Newell of Hackett tells about his problems trying to get to level two in Oswald and there are several other reviews. There is also information on club activities.

We are having a slight problem with the venue for our monthly meetings. The Workers' Club has now decided to charge us \$50 per meeting for the use of the facilities. We cannot afford this without either a rise in yearly subs or a door charge for ordinary meetings. The Committee is looking at introducing a minimal door charge eg 50 cents to try to better cover our costs, particularly by those who are not members of CAUSE. The options will be discussed at the November ordinary meeting. If you cannot get to the meeting, contact one of the Committee members.

Due to the fact that most people leave Canberra over the Christmas period, please note that there will be no December or January ordinary meetings. The February newsletter should be out in late January.

Due to work pressures, Peter McNeil has had to step down from the Committee. We'll miss Peter's sense of humour at the otherwise very serious Committee meetings but he will still be involved with the Hardware SIG and Hardware Hacker's Herald will continue (won't it, Peter!). Volunteers to join the Committee will be welcome - see one on the present Committee members (they'll be wearing name tags at the ordinary meetings).

## Help Service

The following is a list of members who have volunteered to share their knowledge and experience with other members. If you have a problem or just need a bit of advice in any of the areas listed, please ring during the hours shown.

Paul Martin	10-10 M-Su	2532121
Simon Tow	6-7 pm M-F	2888362
Jeff Wilson	6-8 pm M-F	
	4-10 pm S-S	2477330
Gary Duncan	6-8 pm M-F	2319801
Mark Hohmuth	6-9 pm M-W	2975952
Frank Keighley	6-7 pm M-F	2396658
Peter McNeil	6-8 pm M-F	2545545
Doug Stone	6-9 pm M-Su	2516347
James Dempsey	7-9 pm M-Su	2910147
Robert van der Meer	6-8 pm M-F	2417113
Wayne Rochester	6-10 pm M-F	2479093
Andrew Crawford	7-10 pm M-Su	2582685
Fred Pollum	6-8 pm M-Su	2810842
Michael Thong	6-8 pm M-Su	2822323
Gavin Voigt	6-8 pm M-Su	2547821
Colin Vance	6-8 pm M-Su	2511087

## Public Domain Software

Fred Fish:	1 - 360
	catalogue disk
AMICUS:	1 - 26
AMICAN:	various
Compilations:	
(from Fish)	Games 1 - 4
	Utils 1

To obtain disks or to make contributions, please contact the Public Domain Librarians;

Southside	Simon Tow	2888362 (h)
Northside	Lawrence Coombs	2515523 (h)
	Berenice Jacobs	2547248 (h)

Cost - copying fee \$1.00 per disk. Disks can be provided by the members or blank disks held by the Librarians will be supplied at cost.

CAUSE PD disks (volumes 1, 2, 3 and 4) are available from Wayne Rochester at \$3 each. Wayne is now looking for members' contributions towards volume 5.

## Hardware Library

The group now has the camera for our Digiview but, due to the delicate nature of the camera, it will not be lent out for general use just yet. It will be available at monthly meetings for instructional purposes in readiness for lending.

Please contact Robert van der Meer who is the coordinator of the Desktop Video SIG. He may also be able to arrange to have pictures digitised.

Professional Page, Professional Draw, educational software  
 general C programming  
 beginners, PD software, Excellence!  
 laser printing, Pixelscript, desktop publishing  
 bulletin board  
 general help  
 Modula 2  
 desktop video  
 assembler, general programming, CAUSE PD disks  
 beginners, AmigaDOS, file transfer IBM - Amiga  
 video, digitising, drives, joysticks  
 hardware interfaces  
 hardware  
 beginners AmigaDOS

# Transactor - a postscript

*by Paul Blair*

Closing down production of TRANSACTOR was (for me at least) a bit more than just another magazine title gone from the Commodore world. Its closure will have a major effect on the direction of my life from here on.

To judge from the phone calls and letters, the T will be sadly missed. Readers have offered me consolation, money, pledges of help .... and some quite interesting theories connected with the distribution of technical information about the Amiga, and a few possible clues as to the current attitudes prevailing in Commodore.

For me it means time on my hands, a situation I will find novel. I will have to think about my options carefully before re-investing in another project. Time to do what? Paint the house? Go for an overseas trip? Contemplate where I go from here in the computer sense? Its certainly food for thought.

What I'm trying to do is to guess where the computer world will be in 3, 4 or 5 years. Because I figure I should start investigating those waters now!

OK, let me try my hand at crystal ball gazing. Where will we be in 3 years? To start with, 8-bit machines will probably be dead by 1993, at least in Australia. In some overseas countries they are now, and will be then, all the rage. But not here. So forget 8-bit stuff.

Amiga will be there, I reckon, but only just. It's currently 5 years old, and has only reached a low level of market penetration. It is badly priced and marketed, and with more and more people becoming aware of what constitutes traditional Commodore support, breathing in short puffs. For the most incredible computer I have ever seen, this is tragic.

Its market is largely outside the USA/Canada area, which could make it vulnerable in years to come. An 8 year old design is almost terminal in a fast-moving world. The 3000 machine... well, apart from the 'in' crowd, it seems unlikely to make any appreciable impact in the overall computer market. Its concept is just too far away from the mainstream for that, and at \$6300....!!!!.

PC's, 80286 or 386, flood the market right now, at very low prices. The 486 is nearly here, but so are RISC (Reduced Instruction Set Computer) machines. And I reckon that inside 3 years, RISC machines will be where 286/386 machines are today. They seem set to grab a huge slab of the market place dollars, certainly in the corporate market.

Watching the corporate market is the best barometer I can find. Why? Consider this. Five years ago, very few offices had much in the way of readily available computer power. A few people had access to the company mainframes, on which they processed payrolls and so on. The great unwashed who wanted to compute had to wait until after 5pm to rush home, kiss the wife, then lock themselves away with their beloved computers.

Now they have a computer on their work desk, and access to some of the very powerful software that they use for their daily toil. They are now at ease with those packages, get frequent upgrades and ... well, its only a short step from there to wanting to have the same stuff at home. PC clones are being pushed

heavily, and when the software comes "free", the outcome is predictable.

In the middle of this we have the drive by some major companies to put laptops into the hands (or laps?) of students in our schools. The reason goes beyond just moving product. Studies show that we all retain a brand loyalty to anything we use/learn on, whether it be the brand of car we learn to drive in, or the computer we start out with. Smart stuff, and a guarantee of future sales. Commodore is trying hard here, but a few other companies are trying even harder. Take a look at Toshiba!

So what if a clone is monaural (and only just) and won't multi-task? The VGA screens show reasonable graphics, memory and mice are cheap, and a lot of new games are coming out for the PC at the same time as they appear for other computers. The overall price is, in many cases, less than the Amiga. Need I say more?

The business world will embrace RISC because (1) it will give them more grunt per box and (2) cost less than the present gear on offer. Network systems will operate more cost-efficiently, and with the kids now coming "on-stream" into the workforce with ready-built computer hands, there will be no reason to stay with the "old" stand-alone desktops.

Maybe this broad picture will have a few different colour tonings, but the frame will be attractive and affordable. I wonder which computer manufacturers will risk (no pun intended) swimming off at a tangent?

What do others think? Matters of opinion will undoubtedly have a wide spectrum of views. Join in and agree or disagree as you will. Are there other perspectives out there to help me plan my life?

(C)1990 Paul Blair (dead sober)

## Upgrades

### LATTICE C COMPILER

Version 5.1 of Lattice C is now available from the SAS Institute in Sydney. To obtain the update, ring Hulya Uchan at the Institute on 02.4280428.

Prices are:

upgrade from version 5 \$70

upgrade from version 4 \$180

upgrade from version earlier than 4 \$220

For more details, ring Jeff Wilson on 2477330.

### PROFESSIONAL PAGE v2.0

Version 2.0 of this desktop publishing program has apparently been finalised at Gold Disk and is about to be shipped. It contains many enhancements including text rotation and now incorporates Transcript, the word processor which has been only available separately until now.

Version 1.3 is currently available for a special price. In the USA, the box sports a sticker offering a free upgrade to v2.0. If that is the case in Australia too, the program is a bargain as it will combine a good middle-level word processor with one of the best Amiga DTP programs.

# Desktop Publishing

## News and Views

### by Frank Keighley

### of Desktop Utilities

## First look at A-Max II

There are now two configurations of A-Max: A-Max II and A-Max II Plus.

#### A-Max II:

I have tried out the asterisked ones.

- Access an A-Max partition on a hard drive \*
- Access peripherals through SCSI port
- Better use of Amiga accelerator boards \*
- Macintosh sound
- Several screen display modes, eg 1008 x 800 on A2024
- Supports PAL screen display with 1 meg chip ram \*
- Binary (eg doc) as well as text file transfers\*

#### A-Max II Plus

(not yet released; requires Amiga 2000 or above):

- Appletalk compatibility
- read & write Mac disks with standard Amiga drives
- two fully compatible Mac serial ports
- greater Mac midi compatibility
- board installs internally - no external cartridge

At the time when we sent off for it, the upgrade to A-Max II was \$49.95 US. Just to have proper PAL display and hard drive support it was worth it. The Mac is a proper pain in the neck if you are short of drives because of the constant disk changes. If you can put your System and main applications programs on the HD it makes life a lot easier.

A-Max II Plus will be worth it if reasonably priced because it simplifies disk formats (just Amiga and Mac format needed) and eliminates that awkward cartridge which, if dislodged while the machine is on, can and probably will damage CIA chips etc at the back of the Amiga. And who can argue with two Mac-compatible serial ports? Seems sensible.

One user mentioned that the name given when creating the mountlist entry for the partition under AmigaDOS must be the same as the name given when formatting that partition under A-Max. I didn't try doing anything else, so I don't know if it would have been possible. In any case, the manual specifies that you must start the partition name with "AMax...". Remember to back the hard disk up before installing the A-Max partition, because after changing the partition setup, all the affected partitions have to be re-formatted. e.g. on the 2090 there were DH0: (the Amiga boot partition) and DH1: (the fast file system partition). The start and end cylinder of DH0: stayed the same (about 1 and 29 i.e. about 1 Megabyte). DH1: was changed so that the start was 30 and the end about 480, i.e. about 16 MB. This left about 3MB on which to install Mac System 6, Word and Works, as well as some utilities (including A-Max Utilities). For our particular

purposes, this is what's needed. Our data resides on floppies.

The support for binary file transfers is important, although not as convenient as that provided by Mac-2-Dos. Emulation must be running to access the file transfer program, and the dual-window arrangement showing switchable source and destination windows is lacking. In addition, the scroll function does not work, so that if the Amiga file is not visible, it cannot be accessed. This is a serious flaw, unless it is a one-off bug on ours. The other bug seems to lie in the PostScript file output, using the Command-K keys immediately after giving the print command. This no longer appears to work. Admittedly, there is better support for direct output to PostScript printers, but the option should have been retained, and the documentation does not mention its removal. However, overall, A-Max is now quite convenient to use and I wouldn't want to go back to the fuss and bother of having the Mac system, utilities and applications on floppies. To summarise: very useful when you need to be "Mac compatible".

## Desktop Utilities

**PO Box 3053 Manuka ACT 2603**

**Tel. 239 6658 BBS 239 6659 Fax 239 6619**

### New facilities

*A3 Colour Inkjet Printer*

*IBM conversion facility 1.2 MB format  
9600 Baud BBS*

### New software

*All Workbench 2.0 compatible*

*The Art Department 1.0.2*

*image processing software*

*now with Sculpt & Turbo loaders: \$150*

*Contact 1.1h*

*Personal contacts manager*

*now with custom sort & batch printing: \$60*

*CrossDOS 4.0*

*faster MS-DOS file system for the Amiga: \$60*

### New prices

*Laser printing was never more economical!*

**Plus everything we had before, such as  
scanning, more software, disk conversion!**

## IMG Scanner - More on the Poorman's Scanner by Hugh Preston

For some time I had been looking for an inexpensive means of capturing images for historical/numismatic work. I had looked at the Digiview process. Jeff Wilson's article on the IMG Scanner (Scanning for the Poorman, BECAUSE May 1990) suggested that this might be another option and I purchased one after seeing Jeff's in action.

By and large it has been a good investment. This note recounts some of my experiences with the scanner.

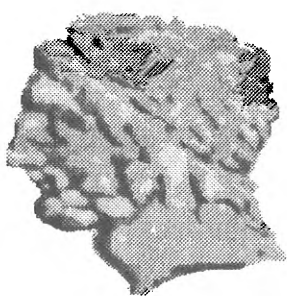
Jeff covered most of the basics and I will limit myself to a fairly brief review. The package consists of a manual, supporting software, and a pair of optic fibre cables attaching to the parallel port at the Amiga end and coming together in a single tube which one has to attach to the printer head. As Jeff said this requires some fiddling. The lack of a good connector is a design flaw - none the less it is not a major problem.

The IMG Scanner uses an infra-red source while scanning, which means it is not greatly affected by ambient light. As the scanner passes over the object material it "reads" or samples the degree of blackness and digital data is recorded on a grey scale of 0 (white) to 255 (black). During each horizontal pass 640 samples are taken. This is repeated down the page until 400 horizontal passes have been completed. A full scan takes 640\*400 samples each recorded on a scale of 0 - 255; 256k of data in all.

Is printer compatibility a problem? As Jeff said there should not be a problem using the scanner with most dot-matrix printers. The package is set up for a Star NX-1000 and "Configuration" files for a number of other printers are supplied. The Config.is files can be altered using a text editor and the manual provides enough information for the non-expert to be able to cope. Generally this will not be necessary, except perhaps to take advantage of the maximum vertical resolution of which the printer is capable.

It is important to take some time learning to understand the scan settings. Experimentation is worthwhile and can well be combined with other activity since each scan takes several minutes and can easily be left. In setting a scan it is most important to make sure that the scan is confined to the region of the picture which has to be captured. The scanner takes 640 samples along a horizontal line and if this is across an entire page, 6 inches, then there will be just over 100 readings per inch, 4 per millimeter if you prefer (I have used inches here because the IMG Scan is an American manufacture and all the parameters are so quoted). To increase the horizontal resolution the distance scanned must be reduced; if a width of, say, 2 inches is needed, then there will be 250 or so readings per inch and the image will be considerably sharper. To start scanning in the right place one adjusts the "Offset Delay", which is a time delay between the print head beginning to move and the scanner starting to record. The distance scanned is controlled by the "Scan Delay", which varies between printers but which is larger for larger values of the parameter.

ZEUS - from Roman coin BC 106



grey scale



log grey scale



black & white

What can it be used for? Because an infra-red source is used the IMG Scan is not suitable for colour work; colour photographs need to be photocopied first. I wanted a scanner for studies relating to ancient coins. Specifically I wanted to be able to capture images from black and white photographs of coins. I also wanted to be able to produce maps of ancient Italy, Greece and other parts of the ancient world. The scanning of black and white photographs, and photocopies of them, works fairly well and I shall return to that further on. Maps and line drawings of any kind I have found to be a different story. A map cluttered with fine print is out of the question - most of the detail is lost. However the scanner can be used to capture coastline and national borders and is superior for this purpose to tracing on the screen. I would be interested to hear from people interested in mapmaking who might have other ideas on how to go about it (cheaply).

Vertical resolution is controlled using the Height parameter. The scan is always 400 lines so if the Height parameter is set at 8000 (8 inches) then there are 50 per inch (2 per millimeter). As with horizontal sampling, reducing the vertical distance scanned will increase resolution. The printer resolution is preset to 108 lines/inch and with this setting there is no point in reducing the vertical height below 4 inches. However most printers have a resolution greater than 108 lines/inch and as I mentioned earlier the relevant parameters can be reset in the Config.is file - in my case to 216 lines/inch which allows me to scan just 1.9 inches and get quite a good vertical resolution.

It should be stressed that the discussion above is about sampling by the scanner and not the screen resolution. I have found it best to set the screen resolution to 320\*200 (low resolution) when scanning. The scan image should then be reset to high resolution during editing.





Scanner patterns from photographs of coins BC 90 – 75. Left griffin, right Italia with Oscan legend.

The editor offers brightness and contrast controls and images can also be produced in linear grey scale, log grey scale, and black and white. Examples of these three modes are shown in the figure. The portrait itself is Jupiter, from a Roman coin, 0.75 inches in diameter. I scanned a black and white photograph which had a blown up image of the coin 2.5 inches in diameter.

The data may be saved in two formats, the IMG RAW file format which saves all the data, 256k, and must be retained until editing is complete and IFF format which is needed to transfer the file to a paint program for further surgery. The reason that the RAW data file should be kept until editing with the IMG software is complete is that the IFF file will have only 16 grey scales compared with the 256 of the RAW data. Saving as an IFF file should be done with the screen set to high resolution 640\*400.

The IMG Scan is limited but it is quite good for some applications, particularly the scanning of black and white photographs. One last point - these can of course then be recorded with a video recorder and used for lecture presentations and the like. Currently retailing at \$250 - \$300 the IMG Scan is a very cheap entre into this technology.

Hugh Preston 2316231

## Classifieds

**Amstrad portable XT clone** 640K LCD screen and twin 720K floppies; built-in 2400 baud modem. Beats buying a powerboard for messyDOS compatibility.

**Star NX1000 printer.** **Commodore 1084 monitor**  
A500 A501 board CA880 drive mega disks books manuals  
Open to deals on all or any part of the system.  
Andrew Crawford 2435611 (w) 2582685 (h)

**CICADA 300 baud modem** with cable; little used, perfect working order; only \$85 ono

**IBM PC optical mouse** incl. reflective pad, only \$120 ono

**CITOH 9 pin colour printer**, new ribbon, works well, only \$220; selling because I can't find a printer driver for it - perhaps you can!

**Amiga joysticks**, new and used from \$8

Several boxes of blank **disks**, unopened ; only \$13 per box.

Ph 2810842 after 6:30 weekdays or anytime on weekends.

## COMPLITERACY

### LEARN HOW TO USE YOUR AMIGA

CompLiteracy is a partnership of computer professionals who specialise in computer education and microcomputer software. All our course and promotional materials are prepared using the Amiga.

**ALL CAUSE MEMBERS PRODUCING THEIR MEMBERSHIP CARDS RECEIVE A 30% DISCOUNT ON THE COURSE FEE.**

This comprehensive course fully covers Workbench and the CLI. There are now also courses on word processing, spreadsheets, graphics and animation.

**CompLiteracy**

**PO Box 74**

**Weston ACT 2611**

**Ph 06 2888 522**

# Education Now!

*by Jeff Wilson*

This month I'll talk about two new educational packages to hit the market place in recent times. They were supplied to me for review by Rob Wilkens of Carin Software.

The two packages going by the titles of "McGee" and "Katie's Farm" cover the adventures of a young boy by the name of McGee (surprise surprise). You are confronted with mindblowing graphics with animations that tell a small story for each screen. At the bottom of each screen are four little pictures each showing a choice. One of these small pictures is surrounded with a white box. This is the one that will be selected if you push the selection button, taking you off to the next scene and great sounds that match each picture.

The recommended age group on the box is 2 to 6 year olds but I would not recommend buying it for anyone over the age of 4. My youngest son is going on 5 and he played it through twice and then lost interest in it. This would be good advice unless you like shelling out for products to sit on the shelf and look good.

It comes on a two disk set, and is a sound and sight extravaganza, but you pay the supreme penalty for this in the way of not being able to run it on a standard Amiga. Recommended minimum configuration is one meg of memory and two disk drives. This will allow it to run, but you will find it very painful in the many disk accesses and long loading times. My suggested minimum configuration would be two meg of memory or a hard disk drive and better still both. The need for the extra memory is enforced by the program itself which offers an install program on disk two for loading all the data files into ram. I would recommend you do this if you have the extra memory as this speeds up the program and makes it much more enjoyable.

Lawrence Productions Inc, the software writers, are to be congratulated on the fantastic sound and graphics, but I'm afraid that in their pursuit of excellence, they cut out the main education market for which their product was aimed. The idea behind their products are good and I'm sure will be enjoyed by the younger children who don't have much on offer at the moment. Maybe I'm a little harsh on them for the configuration requirements as the A590's have made hard drives and memory available to a lot more people these days. But my personal feeling is that they over did the graphics and sound and left out all other requirements of educational software.

One thing that I liked, was the fact that you were able to copy it to your hard disk and also make backup copies of the disks. I get quite steamed when you are unable to make backup copies of software that you are supposed to let your young children use. Math Wizard is a classic example of this, also copyright of educational software stops you using your harddrive if you have one. This is inexcusable where educational software is concerned and is a sure fire way for me not to look at it any further. Also in the favour of this software for people of the Canberra Amiga Group is the fact that Rob Wilkins is offering the packages for \$49 opposed to the recommended retail price of \$69.95. The recommended retail is too high for any educational software and much too high for these packages as far as I'm concerned.

As a means of a wrapup, I'd have to give them a 10 out of 10 for sound and graphics but an overall score of 6 out of 10 due largely to their configuration requirements and also the lack of lasting appeal. Maybe in the future we'll see products from both sides of the fence making for the perfect package.

Until next magazine, have fun learning.

## ***LinkLine Amiga.***

Amiga Software & accessories.

Catering exclusively for the Amiga Owner.

See Andrew Russo at the Club Nights  
or ring 2472024.

## **My Impressions of Textcraft Plus**

*by Mrs Glenda Percival of Higgins*

As a relatively new Amiga user (I have had my computer for 10 months), I feel that I have just begun to scratch the surface of some of the wonderful and amazing things that can be done with an Amiga 500.

Of course, as any parent knows, the first excitement that the children experienced was the fun they had playing some of the many games available. For myself the workbench provided many hours of challenge, as I opened windows and icons and learnt the many different things that I could do.

I began to attend Amiga Club meetings and I was amazed to hear the incredible things that can be done with this machine.

Textcraft Plus was the word processing package that came with my Amiga. I found this a very quick and easy program to learn and use. With the addition of a basic 9 pin dot matrix printer, I no longer write letters by hand, but use my word processor for all my correspondence.

The children use the educational programs for their mathematics and spelling. They are also learning to touch type at an early age.

My eldest daughter is in the middle of a long term Science Project. She has to record the progress results each week. At 10 years of age, she has learnt how to use Textcraft, she can also save her project into her own drawer on a save disk and retrieve her project to add further information, as required.

Drawing packages have also opened the door to imaginative cards, posters and drawings.

We hope to continue learning and gain even more benefit from our Amiga 500 in the future.



# The Super Page

by Paul Blair

When the Amiga versions of SUPERBASE (SB) were released, there was considerable criticism of the manuals that came in the packages. With more and more use, that criticism has been reinforced - simply, they are at times downright confusing. Hopefully, the forthcoming upgrades will include a rewrite of the documentation, and not just another supplement that has to be cross-referenced with existing material.

The worst sections of the manuals cover the REPORT functions - scattered across 3 books and a READ\_ME, in bits and as a section or two. This is a great pity, because the designers of SB have provided a very powerful facility (and easy to use, if only they had told us so!) After all, what use is a very powerful database if it takes the user a fortnight to plod through the manuals before producing effective reports?

The manuals provided with SB4-Windows (for the IBM) have obviously recognised that people have difficulty understanding REPORT, and include a better explanation.

So, at the risk of maybe doing it worse than the original Amiga manuals, let me try to show you what SB can do.

## The Report Function

The SB report functions are designed in such a way that the user can select information from a database, and present it to best possible effect. The principal feature is based on the "group" concept, where data with common attributes may be gathered together in a report for the utmost clarity of output.

The REPORT function allows you to

1. SELECT whatever information you need from your file, in any order, either en masse or with some special considerations in mind, e.g., data before or after a certain date
2. GROUP your information together - e.g., birthdays in March, bills due in November, with maybe a different set of headings
3. Sub-group information together - e.g., birthdays in March by day of week
4. Tally up or count information from the groups or sub-groups at the end of each group (AFTER GROUP)
5. Decide what headings and footings you want on your pages
6. Set up a front page to your report (BEFORE REPORT are the keywords)
7. Produce tallies etc for the entire report (AFTER REPORT)

## Doing It

There are two methods of producing reports in SB Pro. The first is via the Database Management Language (or SB program), where you have to think out what you want, and write the program. You do need to have some experience with SB's DML for this, and a great deal of patience to wade through the manuals.

The second is through the report writer in the Forms Editor, which in fact writes a SB program for you, using the information you supply. While you still have to think out what you want to produce, the Forms Editor makes achievement easy by allowing you to lay out the fields in graphical form on the screen, so you can visualize what you are designing. This is

much easier than laying out lines and columns on a sheet of paper and working out your own "@" (like PRINT AT, if you are not familiar with the command) statements.

There seems to be some confusion about use of the report writer, which I will come back to later.

Lets have a go at writing a DML program to produce a report. Suppose we have a file where we keep track of business expenses. The sort of things we would set up in the file could include details of when we paid who for what, and how much. To make life easier come tax time, we want to group expenditure together based on some pattern, such as all out phone bills in one group, mailing, gas, electricity, wages, and so on. In order to do this, we add to our file design a two character field (name it "code"). In this field we enter "10" for phone bills, "11" for mailing fees, "12" for gas... and so on. All "10" records can be processed as a group. So can the "11" family, and so on. This is only my suggestion, you may have other ideas.

These are our "groups". If we want to know how much our phone costs, we have only to GROUP those records where code = "10" and add up the cost fields. Then we also want to know our overall expenses by adding together all our GROUPS. OK so far?

## Select

Step 1 is where we select the information we want to print out. The first design decision is to identify which fields we want, so we make up a line like this:

```
@1;xdate;@14;payee;@40;service;@70;amt_paid
```

So we have chosen 4 fields - xdate, payee, service and amt\_paid. This ties in with our previous decision a couple of paras above. The "@" numbers define where on the screen or printer the columns are to be placed.

The next line is our "filter" - where we set up a way of being selective about the records we want. If this is to be our phone bill report, we make a line like:

```
where code = "10"
```

Now to put that into SBese. We need to wrap some keywords around our practical lines, so they look like this (I call routines like these "action blocks"):

```
SELECT @1;xdate;@14;payee;@40;service;@70;amt_paid
WHERE code = "10"
END SELECT
```

We could also insert another line into the action block to define the order we want - data in ascending or descending dates, for example. In that case we would pop in before the last line:

```
ORDER xdate ASCENDING
```

That action group will select only our phone bills. If we want to get ALL groups, bundled together as groups and one group after another, we would do this:

```
SELECT @..... (as above)
ORDER code ASCENDING
END SELECT
```

No WHERE this time. We want all groups without applying any filter.

## Groups

Definition: a group is any batch of data sharing some common feature - it may be a date (as in an invoice program) or our previous example of phone bills, where "code" is used to define a family of data.

Now lets do the GROUPS and work out what we want before and after them. Let's start with BEFORE GROUP - the things that we want to happen before any group, or when we change from one group to the next.

We think we want a column heading and a line across the page. So our lines become:

```
? @1;"DATE";@14;"PAID TO";@40;"SERVICE RE-
CEIVED";@70;"AMOUNT"
? @1;"====="
```

That last line is meant to be enough equal signs to draw a line across 77 columns. I usually set up xx\$ = REPLICATE ("=",77) to overcome repetition, then my line becomes:

```
? @1;xx$
```

SB isn't a mind reader. We need to tell it which field you want to define the group - in our case, CODE. And if we want to total up some numbers, we need to flag this so that SB can add them up for us on the fly. In our case, "code" is the group field, and we want to tally up amt\_paid.

Again, we need some SBese to make an action block:

```
GROUP code, amt_paid
BEFORE GROUP code
? @1;"DATE";@14;"PAID TO";@40;"SERVICE RE-
CEIVED";@70;"AMOUNT"
? @1;xx$
END GROUP
```

Now, after the group we need a total. See if you can nut this out:

```
AFTER GROUP code
? @1;xx$
? @40;"SUB-TOTAL";@70; SUM amt_paid
? @1;xx$
END GROUP
```

The two END GROUPs are a bit confusing, aren't they.

SUM is one of the report features available. There are others - COUNT, MIN, MAX, MEAN, VAR and SD. See the Manual Supplement for further details. You can also SUMMARIZE, which leaves out the intermediate details, and gives you the bottom line only.

That takes care of all the GROUP work we need. There are some extra things you can do if you like, and I will mention them after we work our way through this example.

I will diverge for a moment to look at all the semi-colons in the programs lines we have written. Away back in the early days of computers, it was necessary to put a ";" between things, because Basic wasn't too flash at working them out. Later versions could actually discern variable names from numerals et al, so we (er, some of us) got lazy and left them out of our programs.

Well, SB strikes back.. It prefers (but does not always demand) semi-colons. So, after wasting hours trying to work out when you do and don't need them, I have derived a Golden Rule. It says - "put them in".

## Headings and Footings

Now we can turn to the total document - the global view! We can set up a heading and/or footing for each page, to tell the reader what the page contains, and/or the time and date it was printed. It needs another action block, so think about this:

```
HEADING
? @30 "MANGLES AND BANGLES PTY LTD"
? @30;"Summary of Expenses Paid"
? @1;xx$
END HEADING
```

The 3 "?" lines will now print at the head of each page, giving it a tidy (and useful) appearance.

Footing requires a slightly different syntax. In it, we need to specify how many lines are to be used, so we could say:

FOOTING 2 (notice the 2? You must tell "footing" how many lines are needed)

```
? xx$
? "Page ";PG
END FOOTING
```

## Reports

We have now done most of the "core" of the report. All that remains is to put it all into a report framework - what we want before and after the main information.

All reports require a one line starter:

```
REPORT
```

You really have to search the manuals to find out about the BEFORE and AFTER REPORT functions (see page 7-7 of Vol 2!). They act like the BEFORE and AFTER GROUP commands, except that they operate on the total report, not just one or some groups. Having learned that, if we want something before the body of the report, or want to flag that we want to add up some fields we do this:

```
BEFORE REPORT amt_paid
```

What do we want? Perhaps a front cover? OK, set up your design along the lines of a HEADING, and do an EJECT to page on to the body of the report.

The AFTER REPORT section is probably more useful - totals, counts, summaries and so on can be made, along the lines of the AFTER GROUP, but this time, relating to the entire report.

Just as with the GROUP commands, you need to add field names if you want to count, sum, summarize or total across the entire report.

A few refinements now. Except for the REPORT and SELECT lines, any other lines can be added or left out as your need dictate. If you don't want GROUPS, don't have them, and you can leave out the BEFORE and AFTER GROUP setups. The same thing goes for BEFORE and AFTER REPORT.

You can group in levels. You might want your phone bills (level 1) grouped by months (level 2). In that case you set up two GROUP lines, one for each level.

When setting up GROUPS, SB will sort things for you. If you do have an index on the field, things seem to run a tad faster. But an index is not essential.

You can GOSUB. Suppose you have a whole bunch of reports to do, and they will all have a common main heading. OK, no problems. We put the GOSUB into the action block like this:

HEADING  
GOSUB TopPage  
END HEADING

and then set up our common heading, so:

TopPage:  
..... define here the lines you want  
RETURN

By the way, don't forget that labels are case-sensitive!

I commented earlier on about some confusion with the report writer. At the start of Chapter 7, Volume 2, the SB manual indicates that you can only access the report menu when you are working on an existing ordinary form. So some users have given up, thinking that they can't use the function without designing another screen form.

The confusion is this - the manual is not talking about a screen form. A report is a form too, as they point out. So if you want to use the report writer, you either have to use an existing form, or create a new one. After that, you are off and running.

Well, there you have it. REPORT (with QUERY) is the practical end of SB. It enables you to draw together in moments highly functional chronicle from your database. Data, per se, is of no value if it has no form. Maybe this note will help you to achieve better results for your efforts.

#### LATE EXTRA

As I write this, beta test copies of the Amiga upgrade are being circulated. Allowing a few months for users to dig in and test the proposed product, that would put the upgrade onto the market around Christmas time, give or take a month. I understand that, in the event, the Amiga version will be as nearly identical as possible to the IBM version. As a (sometimes confused) user of both products, you can imagine my relief. Now all we want is a way of transferring stuff back and forth....

There is one simple way that I know of. If you want to IM-PORT/EXPORT material between Amiga and IBM versions of SB, use the dBASE 3 option. Why? Well, if you do this, you don't have to set up a new file on the IMPORTing computer. The dB3 EXPORT function writes all the file set-up data into the EXPORTed file, and the IMPORTing process recreates an identical file for you.

The new Precision Software agent in Australia is:

Info Magic Australia Pty Ltd  
5 Skyline Place  
Frenchs Forest NSW 2086

Fax 02 975 1350

(c) 1990 Paul Blair

#### OSWALD

by Paul Newell

I like play Oswald the highest level I have got up to is level one and in the game you jump on these ice things to try and get the parcels and the highest parcel I can get up to is two and when you jump into the water the little bear says try it again and again and when your just about to get your second parcel there is a big man that comes and if you jump into him he ices you and you lose a man and the little bear will say game over.

# MEGADISC

## TO MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR AMIGA

**New Toll-Free Number for ORDERS ONLY 008227418**  
MEGADISC was designed to help you really learn how to use your Amiga.

Tutorials, articles, reviews, hints and tips, useful software, and much more are included to help both the beginner and the veteran to use the Amiga more productively. Not too serious and not too lightweight, MEGADISC entertains you while you learn. Available as single issues, subscriptions of any 3 or 6 issues (past or future), or as a TRIAL PACK (including MEGADOS, our Amiga Manual-on-Disk and MEGADISC 17, and our Catalogue-on-disk). If you get a TRIAL PACK, you can subscribe later for the lower rate mentioned below. Megadisc subscribers get lower prices on all our products, including over 1300 public domain disks. Every Megadisc has the latest VIRUS-KILLER.

### MEGADISC 18 IS NOW AVAILABLE!

#### Special offers !

#### THE ENTIRE MEGADISC SERIES

ORDER MEGADISC 1-17, MEGADOS and 4 free Public Domain Disks for \$185!  
That's 21 information-packed disks! (You can order your PD later.)

#### MEGADOS

AmigaDos Manual-on-disk, with all you need to know about CLI, Workbench 1.2, 1.3 and ARP described in layman's terms for \$19.95. Price for current subscribers \$13.95

#### TRIAL PACK

MEGADISC 17, MEGADOS, AND CATALOGUE-DISK for \$29  
PAST AND CURRENT SUBSCRIBERS - RE-Subscribe for less!

\$45 instead of \$50 for a 3-issue subscription (free PD incl.)  
\$80 instead of \$90 for a 6-issue subscription (free PD incl.)

#### PUBLIC DOMAIN DISKS FOR \$5.50 EACH - \$4.50 FOR SUBSCRIBERS

All our 1300 Disks are fully described on our FREE  
Catalogue-disk

Buy 10 PD disks, get one free - ie, 11 PD disks for \$45 or \$55 !  
GAMES 10-DISK-PACK & PD 10-PACK FOR \$55 each, in  
plastic disk box

WE ALSO TAKE BANKCARD, MASTERCARD and VISA  
ORDERS BY PHONE OR FAX

CONTRIBUTIONS OF ANY KIND ARE MOST  
WELCOME - PLEASE CALL

*Non-Subscribers: Please add \$2 P&P if ordering Public Domain Disks Only*

I enclose a Cheque/Money Order for.....or please charge my Creditcard  
Mastercard/Bankcard/Visa No:..... Exp:.....  
Please send me: Catalogue-on-Disk AT NO COST:..... TRAIL PACK \$29 .....  
ANY 6 issues of MEGADISC for \$90 (please specify):.....[\$80 for  
re-subscribers]  
ANY 3 issues of MEGADISC for \$50 (please specify):.....[\$45 for  
re-subscribers]  
MEGADISC 1-17 and MEGADOS and 4 P.D. disks for \$185:.....  
The 4 free PD disks I want (2 in the case of a 3-issue sub) are:.....  
OR please send your Catalogue-on-Disk now and I will choose the remaining disks  
later:.....  
10-DISK GAMES PACK for \$55:.....PD 10-Pack in box for \$55:.....  
BEGINNER'S PACK (3 DISK SET for \$29).....  
MEGADOS Amiga Dos Manual-on-Disk for \$19.95:.....  
(For current subscribers \$13.95)  
3 DISK ANIMATION SET for \$15:..... OTHER ORDERS : please attach.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Send to: MEGADISC, PO Box 759, Crows Nest 2085  
Telephone: (02) 959 3692 (all hours) FAX: (02) 959 3525

# Public Domain Corner

## Indispensible PD

by Piers Goodhew

Addendum: The program Surf I reviewed last time was on Fish Disk 315. There is another very cute PD graphics program, DrawMap on it as well - this lets you draw all sorts of maps of the earth - close ups, globular types and mercator projections. You can then save this map as an IFF picture and do with it as you will in your favourite drawing program.

Although I won't bore you with the details here, since my last contribution to this journal, my already good-looking Amiga has become somewhat more meaty and powerful than before. So I have gone out and got a whole heap of PD utilities and stuck them into my startup sequence, and now I can't live without them. So herein, they are detailed ...

The first important piece of PD you need is, in fact, the "key" to most other PD - the Aquarium Fish Disk cataloging program.

Unlike all those massive bland listings of each and every program on all 360 disks, Aquarium lets you choose only certain subject areas you want to examine. Then it searches the index, and only shows you the files it encounters that fulfil your requirements, and shows you a synopsis of that file (name, what disk it's on and its description). You can also look for the title (or part of one) of a program, or a word in its description.

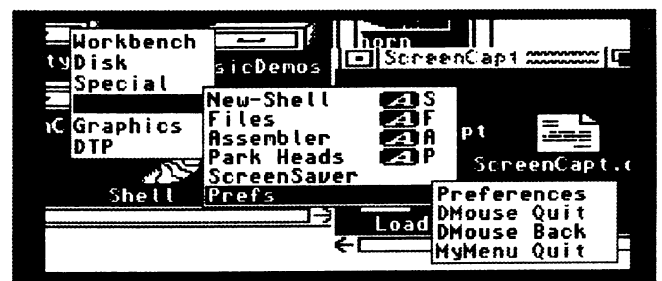
There is a version of Aquarium on Fish Disk 301, but you'll also need the more up to date data file, to be able to examine disks up to 360. Both Aquarium and the data file for disks 0-360 are on the CAUSE BBS (but look out, at 1200 baud the whole lot'll take you over an hour to download). Another caveat is that the data file alone for disks up to 360 is over 500K long - so you might not be able to run the thing on a 512K machine.

The first actual utility is, alas, not on a fish disk yet - don't be fooled there is a program with the same name on one, but it's not the same and is probably ultra-buggy! The file is, however on the CAUSE BBS, and also on the ANU's amiga file area.

The program is PopUpMenu, and it's a definite life-changer. Some of you will have used systems (like Sun Workstations) where you move the pointer over the window you want to deal with, click the menu button, and the menus appear right there under your pointer. PopUpMenu intercepts all normal menu generating events and overrides them, drawing menus that appear right beneath your pointer. All normal obedient Intuition menus work just like normal, but pop up where you want them, not along the menu bar. If you couple this with something like DMouse, which makes whatever window is under the mouse pointer the active window, you get a system just like the one I mentioned above - move the pointer over a window, click the menu button, and its menus appear right there. Although it takes a little while to grow accustomed to it, after a few intensive sessions making minor changes to a document, or having a lot of windows going in workbench, and having to modify a lot of them, you'll wonder how you ever got on without it.

The program comes with full documents and details a few other useful things it does.

One of the disadvantages of an iconic method of file access is that, even when you've got a hard disk, if you keep a file nicely organised into a nice tidy drawer inside a well organised set of drawers (like, say, inside "3rd party programs:" you have a "Commercial Files" drawer and in that you have a "Paint Programs" drawer, in that a "normal graphics" drawer and in that you keep a special "DPaint" drawer for DPaint and its associated files) You're going to spend quite some time clicking away and waiting for directories to get loaded and so on. Although you can turn to the CLI, where you don't have to have directories loaded in to access files in them, keeping a well organised filing system means you are still going to have to do a lot of typing to get at the file you want.



MyMenu is a fab little program that lets you attach your most used programs onto your workbench menus. Now all you have to do is select "DPaint" from the "Graphics" menu, and away you go. MyMenu lets you use any custom array of menu names and so on, and also what program is actually started by selecting the menu option. For instance, you can use generic names like "Text editor" or "directory utility" to start whatever one of each currently has favour with you. Or you could do completely arbitrary things like having a "Lawn Mower" menu item within a "14th Century Despots" submenu of a "Rumplestiltskin" menu, which causes a notorious screen hack (or maybe a terrible virus) to be loaded in. And all this could be speedily invoked by holding down the right-Amiga key in conjunction with any old key, say "}".

MyMenu is on Fish Disk 225, and also on the CAUSE BBS. The file on the BBS is fairly short on details - you have to work out yourself that two of the files need to be renamed and relocated, and you also have to work out how to use the "config" file to set up the menus you want. But I didn't have a lot of trouble doing this. I'm sure the one on the Fish Disk would have nice documentation.

Importing graphics of the workbench like that of MyMenu operating is relatively simple with a program like ScreenCapt (which is what I used, it's by local person Wayne Rochester and is on CAUSE disk #4), but it is a tad cumbersome. On the hated Macintosh, almost every program has an "Edit" menu, where the options of "Cut", "Copy" and "Paste" reside. Whatever one program can use that you've cut from another program, it will. Wouldn't it be nice if you could highlight some part of a screen you were working on, and have it posted to the Clipboard, then go into your favourite Word Processor or Paint Program and just select

cont. p15

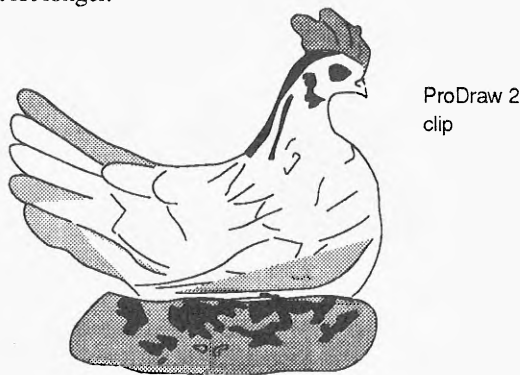
# Professional Draw 2.0

- a review by Jeff Wilson

Being a disappointed owner of Professional Draw 1.0, I had awaited the arrival of Professional Draw 2.0 for many months.

Professional Draw 1.0 lacked most of the features required by a structured drawing program, and would not have sold at all if it had not been the only one available for the Amiga.

If what I have read is to be believed, version 1.0 was rushed out for the market and then time was devoted to version 2.0 to enable everything that was required by a structured drawing package to be included. The excuse was that if it was released in stages, then the time taken to arrive at stage 2.0 would have taken a lot longer.



The main drawbacks of Professional Draw 1.0 were the lack of tools and the slow speed of screen updates making the rotation of an object unbearable. Screen updates as a whole were intolerable, and this made drawing a painful process. It was very difficult and time consuming to rotate text.

I've only had Professional Draw 2.0 for about two months at the time of writing this article, but have been using it constantly since its arrival. After the frustrations suffered with version 1.0, I can state without fear of reprisal, that this is indeed a new version in more than just numeric terms. The drawbacks I mentioned above have been addressed, along with many new and interesting features being added.

The first noticeable enhancement upon startup, is that you now have a page pre-set for you. This is one feature I like, as it saves time when wanting to zip in for a quick draw or to alter an existing clip.

The printer drivers, and also the print routines seem the same as those now incorporated in Professional Page 1.3. This allows a very good output on a nine pin dotmatrix printer.

The dissecting tool that allows you to disconnect control points from the object, now also allows the control points to be deleted by holding down the 'Alt' key and pressing the left mouse button while the pointer is above the control point you wish to delete. If you have used the auto-trace utility program (which I don't recommend as I will explain later) and then loaded the resulting clip in to Professional Draw for editing, you will notice that the image will have an extra box around it. When you try to get rid of this box with the 'Alt' dissect tool combination, you will find that you will be left with two points that are attached to the rest of the clip and if you delete them then you will lose the whole clip. To get around this, you will need to ungroup the object first. Remember to group the object again after use or else you will only retain the last single object that you chose. The extra box that I spoke of above would appear to be a bug, and on the strength of this I've written to

Gold Disk to inform them.

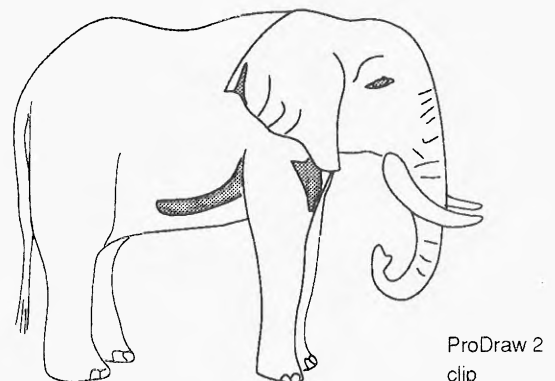
Ellipses can now be converted to structured beziers, thus allowing the control points to be moved individually. This now allows for some fancy shapes by pulling on individual points. This can be useful when used in conjunction with the warp tool. It is also an easy way to get those curves just right.

Professional Draw now supports output to Encapsulated PostScript Files (EPSF). EPSF files are an accepted industry standard page description language that allows the files to be taken over to other programs that support the EPSF standard. Through the use of programs such as Crossdos, your files may be imported into other packages on other types of computers.

By purchasing the AGFA Compugraphic Outline fonts from Gold Disk, you can make use of the 35 fonts contained on the 5 disk set. This is made possible by a utility program supplied on disk 1 of the font set. These fonts are written as objects enabling you to distort, bend or rotate them. This feature allows many special effects that can be saved as clips and then exported into Professional Page 1.3. One of the new features that is especially of use is the ability for the text to follow a pre-defined path. One of the first things that comes to notice is the much improved speed involved with the screen updates when moving the text around. Previously, it was possible to go and make a pot of tea while the screen was been updated after a change been made to a text string.

Another nice feature now added to ProDraw is the ability to blend specific colours or shapes from one to another. You provide the first and final colours or shapes along with the total number of steps, then the program takes over while you sit back and relax. This feature will allow you to create shapes with very realistic highlighting. While the onscreen representation is colour dithering, the final output is always smooth.

Now for my favourite feature of the package, Auto-Tracing of bitmap graphics. This is in the form of a utility program supplied on the same disk as ProDraw 2.0. The program allows you to choose the bitmap image you wish to trace and the output path and clip name. You can also specify how close in pixels you wish the lines to detect for the trace. The obvious advantage to someone in the desktop publishing (DTP) field, is the ability to digitize a logo, then auto-trace it for inclusion



in a Professional Page or Pagesetter II project. Of my testing so far, the results have varied depending on the complexity of the bitmaps, but overall have been quite dismal, very disappointing considering this was the main reason that I bought the drawing package. If this is your planned use for buying ProDraw II then I would suggest that you forget it as there would appear to be a problem with the algorithm used to do the Auto trace. Basically it puts far too many control points in and ren-

ders the object useless for output. Hopefully this will be fixed in the near future and add to the otherwise excellent package.

Oversize bitmaps now present no problem for ProDraw, as it will now load bitmaps above the 640 X 512 size limit. I'm not sure what the limitations are but I've not had a problem to date.

You now have the ability to mask objects when required. This simply means that you remove the transparency of the object, which is extremely useful when working with text objects.

In summing up, I can say that this is nothing short of a major upgrade to a badly needed software package. Although there are still some failings with the new package in the way of missing features, the new features overshadow the shortfalls making for a powerful drawing package that would be expected on a machine such as the Amiga. Some of the new features will take some experimentation on your part to perfect their finer details, but the effort put in to acquiring the needed skills will be well worth the effort. Remember what I said earlier about the autotrace and don't go and buy this package if that is what you plan to use for. There is plenty of good clip-art appearing on the market so make use of this and save yourself some money as well.

From a desktop publishing point of view, I now feel that much closer to the machines leading the DTP field at the moment and more importantly, I'm now more capable of carrying out some of the more complex jobs that I had to reject in the past due to the lack of features in the old package.

---

## GIF Pictures

*by Charles Syms*

What is the GIF format. Briefly it is a Graphics Interchange Format developed by Compuserve in America as a universal standard to allow the interchange of graphics pictures between different computer types and allow these pictures to be easily distributed over the electronic bulletin board system.

The GIF system defines a standard whereby high quality colour pictures are compressed and converted to the GIF standard, pictures can be compressed to a degree where the GIF file may be half to an eighth of the size of the original picture.

Picture resolution can be up to 16,000 by 16,000 pixels if you can find a computer that goes this good and the GIF format can support up to 256 colours out of a possible set of 16 million colours.

Some computer systems that support the GIF format are Commodore Amiga, Apple Mac, IBM, Atari, Tandy Colour Computer 3 and possibly some others. As the GIF format is a standard it does not matter which computer produced the picture, it can be viewed on all the machines by using the proper viewer software for your computer.

The results you get will depend on which machine you are using, for example a picture produced in a high resolution HAM mode by an Amiga will look pretty awful when viewed on an IBM using the four colour CGA mode. Some pictures from the

other machines will cause a high degree of flicker when viewed on the Amiga.

For further reading on the GIF format there is a file available called "GIFDOCS.LZH" which I will send to the CAUSE Bulletin Board.

I will now describe a range of GIF utilities for the Amiga starting with two viewers.

HAMGIF is possibly the most popular Amiga GIF viewer and has to be run from the CLI, you simply type "HAMGIF name.GIF" where "name" is the picture name. There are other options you can use, for a list of options you type HAMGIF only and the options will be listed.

With HAMGIF you can type a long list of pictures after the command hamgif by just leaving one space between each picture name, this will show each picture for a few seconds and then go to the next picture. On the last picture you click the left mouse button on the top left of the screen to exit.

HAMGIF will only show GIF pictures it will not convert them to IFF or any other function but it does run fast. If the picture you are showing is bigger than the Amiga screen then HAMGIF will compress the picture to fit on the screen.

VIRTGIF is another GIF viewer, again it is run from the CLI in a similar manner to HAMGIF. VIRTGIF has the added features of pull down menus and allows you to change the screen resolution while you are viewing the picture and you can save the GIF pictures as Amiga IFF format to use in an Amiga paint programs etc.

VIRTGIF is Shareware and the save function only works on registered copies of the program. The registration is not expensive and would seem to be good value, the only flaw I can see with virtgif is that it runs very slowly.

VIRTGIF has the advantage that if the picture is bigger than than Amiga screen it will draw the picture full size and then by holding the left mouse button you can scroll around the picture hence getting very good resolution.

HAMSHARP is a utility to convert GIF pictures to Amiga format, it will use IFF or HAM as dictated by the picture requirements. Again has to be run from CLI.

AMGIF is a utility to convert Amiga picture to GIF, lower resolution pictures being converted to GIF pictures with 32 colours and higher resolution and HAM pictures being converted to GIF pictures with 256 colours. Again has to be run from the CLI.

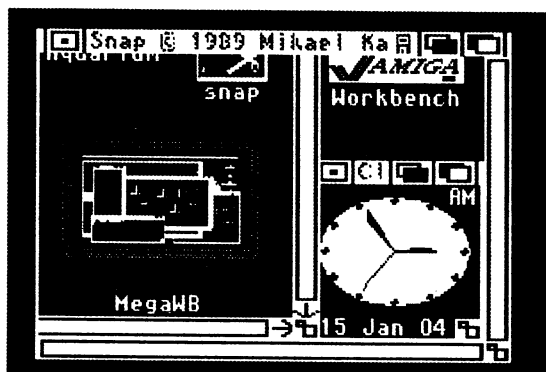
Another way to convert GIF pictures to IFF is to use the SCREENX program. To do this you go to a CLI screen and run SCREENX then use hamgif to show the GIF picture, then use the <left amiga> + N key combination to pop SCREENX to the front, then name the screen that is listed without a name and save the screen to disk.

Finally another program for pictures with nothing to do with GIF is a program called IFF2EX which takes an Amiga picture and converts it to an executable program which when executed shows the picture and you use the left mouse button to stop.

All of the programs listed here are either public domain or shareware and are available from the usual sources.



"Paste" and have it appear right there for you. Or to be able to do the same with text - to copy the message some program has given you and then be able to paste it into any other window that accepts typed input? Don't rush out and buy a MacIntosh, now that they're "cheap". Do something more sensible with your money, like set it on fire.



Snap is a program on Fish Disk 326. It lets you either try to Cut text, or definitely cut graphics, out of any piece of display lying about. Because it's 3rd party, not intrinsic to the program you might be using, you can have a go even at bits the program may not want you to

- like the title bar, or the little screen that tells you how many lines, words or characters you've used. Graphically, you can cut anything at all, except menus (because you can't hold down the right number of buttons at the right time). It also lets you paste any text into a window that accepts typing as input (by, in fact, pretending to be you typing this information in). This is a major bonus as almost all Amiga programs do not use the clipboard properly if at all (The exceptions textually are NotePad and TxEt). Now you can cut a list of CLI commands out of a file you just typed to the screen, and paste them in and have them executed with only a few keystrokes. Doing graphics is not so simple; the only paint program I know of to use the clipboard properly is Express Paint 3. No graphical word processor or DTP packages I've tried will paste in graphics in the clipboard, they all use their own pretend, incompatible, clipboards. If you have Express Paint, you can use VSnap on the same Fish disk, and this will conveniently post the graphics to the clipboard. Snap itself, however lets you save the graphics to disk (which could be a RAM disk) and you can then load them into whatever in the normal way. (The picture here is in fact a snap of a snap)

## Canberra Amiga Users Society Inc.

### Application for Membership

Name : .....

Address : .....

..... Postcode .....

Phone : ..... (w)

..... (h)

What do you expect to gain from the Users' Group?

What are your interests?

What hardware items do you have in your computer system?

Please answer the following questions with a yes or no.

Is this a renewal? ..... (membership fee is \$20)

Do you wish to join the CAUSE BBs? ..... (\$5 extra)

Will you regularly attend meetings? .....

Will you help with a special interest group (SIG)? .....

Send your replies to:

**The Secretary**

**CAUSE**

**PO Box 596**

**Canberra City ACT  
2601**

# Your Software Warehouse

## AMIGA

### - GAMES - ARCADE

ALTERED BEAST	49.50
ANT HEADS	29.50
BATTLE SQUADRON	59.00
BATTLEHAWKS	59.00
BEVERLY HILLS COP	44.00
BLOCK OUT	59.00
BUDOKAN	49.50
CABAL	59.00
CHASE H.Q.	59.00
CLOUD KINGDOM	59.50
COLONY	66.50
COMBO RACER	59.00
COMMANDO	49.50
CRACK DOWN	59.50
CYBERBALL	49.50
DOUBLE DRAGON II	59.00
DRAGON NINJA	59.00
DRAGON'S LAIR ENH	89.00
E-MOTION	59.50
FACE OFF	39.00
FLIMBO'S QUEST	59.50
FLOOD	49.50
GHOSTBUSTERS II	59.00
GHOST'n GOBLINS	59.00
GUNSHIP	49.00
HOT ROD	54.50
INDIANA JONES ARC	49.00
IT CAME FROM THE DESERT	59.00
JUMPIN' JACKSON	49.50
KID GLOVES	59.50
KILLING GAME SHOW	59.50
LIFE & DEATH	59.50
LORDS RISING SUN	69.00
LOST PATROL	59.50
MEAN STREETS	59.50
NEW Y'K WARRIORS	49.50
NINJA SPIRIT	59.50
NINJA WARRIORS	54.00
NZ STORY	59.00
ONSLAUGHT	54.00
OP. THUND'R BOLT	59.00
PARANOID 90	59.50
PINBALL MAGIC	39.00
PIPE MANIA	59.50
POWERDRIFT	59.00
RAINBOW ISLANDS	49.00
REACH FOR STARS	49.00
RESOLUTION 101	59.50
RICK DANGEROUS 2	59.50
SH/BEAST II w/T-Shirt	79.50
SHUFFLE'K CAPE	49.00
SILKWORM IV	CALL
SPACE ACE	89.00
SPEEDBALL 2	CALL
STUNT CAR RACER	59.00
SUPER WONDERBOY	49.00
TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES	59.50
TEST DRIVE II	49.00
T.D. II DISKS	39.00
THE JETSONS	49.00
TURRICAN	49.50
UNREAL	59.50
VENUS THE FLYTRAP	49.50
WILD STREETS	59.00
WINGS OF FURY	44.50
XENOPHOBE	49.00
XENON 2	59.00
X OUT	45.50

## STRATEGY

ARMADA	49.00
AUSTERLITZ	59.50
BAL. OF POWER 1990	59.00
BATTLE COMMAND	CALL
BATTLE TANK GMY	89.50
BATTLE TANK ST'L	89.50
BETRAYAL	CALL
BORODINO	49.00
CARRIER COMM'D	69.00
CONFLICT EUROPE	59.00
COURTROOM	69.50
DEBUT	59.50
FIRE BRIGADE	49.00
FULL METAL PLNT	59.50
GENGHIS KHAN	79.00
GOLD O' AMERICAS	49.00
IMPERIUM	49.50
KHALAAN	59.50
M1 TANK PLATOON	59.50
MIDWINTER	69.50
NORTH & SOUTH	59.00
OIL IMPERIUM	59.00
POPULOUS DATA	39.00
PORTS OF CALL	49.00
POWERMONGER	59.50
PRINCE OF PERSIA	59.50
RORKE'S DRIFT	54.50
SHERMAN M4	59.50
SIM CITY	79.00

## ADVENTURE

BANDIT KINGS of A.C.	89.50
BARD'S TALE I/II	49.00
BLOODWYCH	59.00
CADAVR	59.50
CAPTIVE	59.50
CASTLE MASTER	59.50
CHAMPIONS KRYNN	54.50
CHAOS STR'K BACK	CALL
CHRONO QUEST II	69.50
CODENAME ICEMAN	59.50
COLONELS BEQUEST	59.50
CORPORATION	59.50
C'QUEST CAMELOT	59.50
DRAGON STRIKE	59.50
DRAGON'S BREATH	69.50
DRAGONS FLAME	49.00
DRAKKHEN	59.00
DUNGEON MASTER	59.00
ELVIRA	CALL
HERO'S QUEST	59.50
HOUND SHADOW	59.00
HUNT FOR RED OCT	59.00
INDIANA JONES ADV	59.00
KHALAAN	59.50
KING'S QUEST IV	59.50
KING'S QUEST TRIPLE PACK I/II/III	84.50
KNIGHTS OF CRYST	59.50
LEIS. SUIT I/II (ea)	49.50

## "INDOOR"

BATTLE CHESS	64.00
BRIDGE V6.0	59.00
CHESS CHAMP 2175	79.50
GIN/CRIBBAGE KING	59.50
SEXTIMATES	69.50
STRIP POKER II	59.00
STP. DATA I/II/III	29.50
ULTIMATE CASINO	59.00
VEGAS GAMBLER	25.00

## COMING SOON

(ORDER NOW)	
HAWK	
MIDWINTER II	
MIG 29 FULCRUM	
MONKEY ISLAND	
SPEEDBALL 2	
TV SPORTS BASEBALL	
VETTE	

## WP

BECKERTTEXT	135.00
CYGNUS ED PRO	139.00
EXCELLENCE2	299.00
GOLD DISK TYPE	79.50
KIND WORDS II	99.00
PEN PAL	189.00
PROTEXT	189.00

## SPREADSH'S

ADVANTAGE	269.00
ANALYZE!	89.00
DG CALC	89.00
HAICALC	79.00
SUPERPLAN	119.00
TEMPICITY	59.50

## BUSINESS

BUDGETEER	79.00
DAY BY DAY	59.00
DESKTOP BUDGET	99.00
EASY LEDGERS	395.00
ELECTRONIC CASH	179.00
GOLD DISK OFFICE	399.00
HOME ACCOUNTS	89.00
HOME FRONT	129.00
PERS. A/C PLUS	59.00
PHASAR V4.0	99.00
SBA CASH	149.00
SYSTEM 3	129.00
THE ACCOUNTANT	429.00
WORKS PLATINUM	195.00

## GRAPHICS

3D PROFESSIONAL	549.00
3D TEXT ANIMATOR	79.50
ANIMATION STUDIO	249.00
ART DEPARTMENT	159.00

TV TEXT PROF.	239.00
ULTRA DESIGN	445.00
VIDEOSCAPE 3D	249.00
X-CAD DESIGNER	229.00

## LANGUAGES

AC/BASIC	289.00
AMIGA VISION	195.00
AMOS (Pacronics)	125.00
ARXX	74.00
ARGASM	119.00
ASSEMBRO	159.00
AZTEC C PROF.	395.00
BENCH. MOD-2	279.00
CAN DO	195.00
DEVPAK 2.0	149.00
GFA BASIC +COMPL	139.00
HI-SOFT BASIC PRO	179.00
HI-SOFT EXTENSION	54.50
JPORTH PROF.	349.00
LATTICE C V5.2	395.00

## MUSIC

AMAS	299.00
AUDIO MASTER III	149.00
BARS & PIPES	399.00
DELUXE MUSIC CS	99.50
DR T'S APPRENTICE	149.00
DR T'S COPYIST DTP	449.00
DR T'S TIGER CUB	119.00
MASTER SOUND	119.00
MASTER TRACKS	549.00
MUSIC X JUNIOR	199.00
PERFECT SOUND	189.00
QUARTET	99.00
SONIX PLUS 2	125.00
SOUND EXPRESS	119.00

## UTILITIES

A-MAX II	CALL
AMI ALIGNM'T KIT	69.50
CLI-MATE	69.00
CROSS DOS V4.0	59.50
DISK 2 DISK	59.00
DISK MECHANIC	119.00
DISKMASTER	74.00
DOCTOR AMI	59.50
DOS LAB	44.00
DOS 2 DOS	69.50
D.U.D.E	74.50
DUNLAP UTILITIES	99.50
FAT TRACKS	89.50
KCS POWER BOARD	780.00
(IBM emulator + memory exp.)	
LASER SCRIPT	49.00
MAC 2 DOS	199.00
PIXEL SCRIPT	199.00
PROJECT D	74.00
QUATERBACK v4.0	89.00
QUART'B'K TOOLS	99.00
STARSOFT HD BACK	69.50
XCOPY + Hardware	109.00

## EDUCATION

We also carry a large range of education software. Please call or request our catalogue.

## DISKS

We got special deals on blank, unlabelled disks. Call us !!!

We've got everything  
you'll ever want for  
your AMIGA

- We now carry the full GENUINE Commodore Amiga hardware range
- FREE PRICELISTS ("AmigaLINK" Magazine)
- FRIENDLY, KNOWLEDGABLE STAFF
- HUGE RANGE OF PRODUCTS for AMIGA, C64/128 and IBM PC
- COMPLETE ONE-STOP AMIGA Shop
- INTERLINK Vouchers can be used until the 21st December!!!!

*There's always ways to save at INTERLINK*

SIM CITY TERRAIN	39.00
SUPREMACY	69.50
TEAM YANKEE	69.50
UMS II	69.50
WALL STREET	59.00
WARHEAD	59.50
WATERLOO	59.00

## SPORTS

4D BOXING	69.50
CRICKET	59.50
CYBERBALL	49.50
DAYS OF THUNDER	69.50
G. NORMAN GOLF	59.50
HARD BALL 2	59.50
HONDA RVF	49.00
INDIANAPOLIS 500	59.50
INT'L 3D SOCCER	CALL
J. NICKLAUS GOLF	59.00
KICK OFF II V2.0	59.50
MIC'L WRESTLING II	59.50
O-P BASKETBALL	59.00
O-P HORSE RACING	59.00
PRO TENNIS	59.00
Q8 TEAM RALLY	CALL
STREET ROD	49.50
TENNIS CUP	39.50
TV SP. BASEBALL	CALL
TV SP. BASKETB'L	69.00
TV SP. FOOTBALL	69.00
ULTIMATE DARTS	49.00

LEIS. SUIT III	59.50
LOOM	59.50
MANHUNTER II	69.50
MIGHT & MAGIC II	59.50
MORTVILLE MAN.	39.00
OPERATION STEALTH	59.50
PIRATES	59.50
POLICE QUEST I/II	59.00
POOLS OF RADIANCE	54.50
SHOGUN	69.00
SIERRA HINT BOOKS	15.00
SPACE QUEST I/II	49.00
SPACE QUEST III	59.00
THRILL WINNING II	59.50
TIME TRAVELLER	59.00
XENOMORPH	59.50

## FLIGHT SIMS

A10 TANK KILLER	69.50
BOMBER	49.50
BOMBER MISSION	39.50
F16 COMBAT PILOT	49.50
F19 STEALTH F'TER	69.50
F29 RETALIATOR	59.50
FALCON	54.00
FALCON MISSION	49.00
FALCON MISSION 2	54.00
FLIGHT 'INTRUDER	69.50
THEIR FINEST HOUR	64.50
WINGS	69.50

PROWRITE V3.0	189.00
PROWR. FONTS (ea)	59.50
SCRIBBLE PLAT.	89.50
TRANSCRIPT	89.50
WORDPERFECT V4.1	449.00

## DATA BASE

DATA RETRIEVE	99.00
DATA RET. PRO	199.00
DBMAN V	399.00
FREELANCE	49.50
SUPERBASE	89.50
SUPERBASE 2	139.00
SUPERBASE PRO	299.00
SUPERBASE RTM	59.50
YOUR FAM. TREE v2	119.00

## DTP

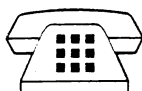
CITY DESK II	199.00
E-CLIPS I/II (ea)	109.00
GOLD DISK FONTS ea	89.50
KARA FONTS	79.00
OUTLINE FONTS	269.00
PAGESSETTER II	179.00
PAGESTREAM V2	395.00
PAGESTR. FONTS ea.	54.00
PAGESTREAM FORMS	54.50
PRO PAGE 1.3	299.00
PUBLISH'R CHOICE	195.00
SAXON PUBLISHER	595.00
SUPERCLIPS (PP) ea	49.50

BOARDMASTER PCB	149.00
COMIC SETTER	129.00
CREDIT TEXT SCROL	59.50
DELUXE PAINT III	99.50
DELUXE PHOTOLAB	99.50
DELUXE PRINT II	99.50
DELUXE VIDEO III	99.50
DESIGN 3-D	129.00
DIGI-MATE 3	59.50
DIGI-PAINT 3	119.00
DIGI-VIEW GOLD 4	299.00
DIGI-WORKS 3D	189.00
DIRECTOR	99.00
DIRECTOR TOOLKIT	59.00
ELAN PERFORMER 2	195.00
FLOOR PLAN CONST.	78.00
IMAGINE	CALL
INTROCAD PLUS	179.00
LIGHTS,CAM,ACT	119.00
MODELLER 3D	119.00
MOVIESETTER	129.00
PAGE FLIPPER +FX	189.00
PAGE RENDER 3D	189.00
PHOTON PAINT II	195.00
PIX MATE	99.00
PRINTMASTER +	59.00
PROMOTION	119.00
SCENE GENERATOR	59.50
SCULPT 3DXL	259.00
SCULPT 4D JNR	229.00
TOP FORM	119.00
TITLE PAGE	179.00
TURBO SILVER 3D	239.00

**INTERLINK**  
**SOFTWARE** PTY. LTD.

**SUPER  
STORE**

UNIT 2, 216 COWLISHAW STREET,  
TUGGERANONG TOWN CENTRE



ORDER NOW

**008 020 633**

(orders only)

**(06) 293 2233**



FAX (06)  
**293 1438**



MAIL ORDER  
write on any piece of paper and send to -  
P.O. Box 1155  
Tuggeranong ACT 2900

